



Annual Report to the Office of Vocational and Adult Education December 2005

Kentucky Adult Education (KYAE) has achieved remarkable progress over the past few years. Highlights include:

- Adult education enrollment grew 144 percent, from 51,177 in FY00 to 124,801 in FY05.
- In the past six years, more than 70,000 Kentuckians have earned a GED. In FY05, 9,757 Kentuckians earned a GED.
- Workplace education enrollment climbed from 8,724 in FY00 to 50,401 in FY05. In FY05, employees benefiting from workforce education programs represented 1,867 employers in 112 Kentucky counties.
- Family literacy enrollment grew from 1,357 in FY01 to 4,379 in FY05.
- The Kentucky Virtual Adult Education Web site (www.kyvae.org), the first of its kind in the nation, provided access to instructional curricula to 7,160 adults in FY05.

1. State Leadership Activities

Activity One – Professional Development

The establishment or operation of professional development programs to improve the quality of instruction provided pursuant to local activities required under Section 231 (b), including instruction incorporating phonemic awareness, systematic phonics, fluency, and reading comprehension, and instruction provided by volunteers or by personnel of a state or outlying area.

KYAE provides professional development (PD) grounded in research and program improvement and linked with postsecondary education. Ongoing PD is required for every adult educator. To facilitate development of required annual Individual Professional Development Plans, KYAE provides a PD handbook, online PD calendar with up-to-date course offerings and a PD newsletter, which in FY05 focused on ESL instruction, PD planning and research-based instruction.

More than 900 adult educators benefit from high-quality, research-based professional development in adult learning, technology, family literacy, leadership, reading, quality improvement and ESL. KYAE offers classroom-style instruction as well as blended courses that combine face-to-face training with online assignments, plus online courses via the Kentucky Virtual Adult Education Web site, www.kyvae.org.

KYAE contracts with the Collaborative Center for Literacy Development (CCLD) at the University of Kentucky to offer the Kentucky Adult Educators Literacy Institute (KAELI), which is developing master reading and writing instructors through a three-hour college course based on in-depth research-based reading and writing processes. Adult educators develop an understanding of the reading and writing processes, strategies for

instruction in reading comprehension and vocabulary, the ability to use inquiry-based instruction and the ability to use technology and literature in literacy instruction. More than 160 adult educators have completed the KAELI course. It is estimated that 8,000 adult students have experienced KAELI techniques directly from participants and co-workers. A requirement of KYAE's contract with CCLD is evaluative research on KAELI to determine the effectiveness of the delivery of course content, usefulness for the adult educator and impact on outcomes for low literacy adults. Emergent findings are provided to KYAE, KAELI directors and collaborative partners as part of the process for reviewing and assessing KAELI.

The Adult Education Academy for Professional Development at Morehead State University offers ESL workshops and a Leadership Institute. In FY05, 161 adult educators attended 14 ESL workshops offered across the Commonwealth. In addition, 54 adult educators enrolled in ESL200, an online course. Adult education program directors develop leadership skills through the Leadership Institute by applying data-based decision making for program improvement and quality outcomes. In FY05, 26 program directors honed their skills through the Leadership Institute.

In FY05, KYAE was selected to participate in the Center for Applied Linguistics ESL capacity-building initiative to help states provide systematic, effective and quality professional development for ESL professionals. The Kentucky team involved in this effort consists of two KYAE staff, the ESL PD contact at the Adult Education Academy and a local ESL instructor.

The Kentucky Institute for Family Literacy (KIFL), National Center for Family Literacy, provides family literacy PD, technical assistance and curriculum resources. In FY05, KIFL provided nine workshops for 249 adult educators.

In FY05, KYAE sponsored tuition for 30 adult educators who completed courses through a KYAE partnership with Penn State World Campus. The courses may be applied toward meeting the requirements of the Certificate in Family Literacy, which is a collaboration between the Goodling Institute for Research in Family Literacy at Penn State and the National Center for Family Literacy.

KYAE and the Kentucky Association for Adult and Continuing Education hosted a Kentucky conference in conjunction with the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education conference in Louisville. The conference featured professional development sessions and networking opportunities for adult education providers. More than 900 Kentucky adult educators attended.

KYAE conducts an annual GED Examiners Training conference to provide professional development for employees of GED testing centers statewide. At the FY05 conference, 26 new GED examiners received training. In addition, 16 GED examiners took KYAE's online examiners course for refresher training.

A new online course for adult educators, Training the Workforce, was developed and implemented in spring 2005.

Additional professional development included:

- Orientation to Adult Education, KYAE200 online, 188 adult educators enrolled
- Four Orientation to Instruction and Curriculum sessions for 53 adult educators
- Six Assessment Quality workshops for 110 adult educators

Activity Two – Technical Assistance

The provision of technical assistance to eligible providers of adult education and literacy activities.

KYAE holds county programs accountable for meeting NRS performance indicators as well as enrollment goals based on need in each county. Using information in the Adult Education Reporting Information Network (AERIN), KYAE conducts ongoing desk audits of all 120 county programs. Based on desk audits and information from other sources, KYAE identifies counties in need of technical assistance. In FY05, KYAE implemented a new model for technical assistance. To support this effort, KYAE applied for assistance from the American Institute for Research, which provided consultation and advice on developing desk reviews, one element of the overall program review and continuous improvement model. See “Activity Five” below for information about how KYAE technical assistance supports program improvement.

KYAE, with assistance from KIFL, determines counties in need of technical assistance targeted to family literacy programs. In FY05, KIFL made 55 family literacy technical assistance visits.

Activity Three – Technology Assistance

The provision of technology assistance, including staff training, to eligible providers of adult education and literacy activities to enable the eligible providers to improve the quality of such activities.

Adult educators in Kentucky have access to several online curriculum products, including PLATO, WIN, LiteracyLink and Read on the Web to help meet the needs of a diverse student population. In FY05, KYAE offered the following technology training:

- 43 workshops providing 235 participants with PLATO instruction training
- 23 workshops training 149 adult educators in WIN instruction
- Two LiteracyLink workshops providing 15 participants training in instruction
- 10 workshops training 107 adult educators in the Pre-GED Connection component of PBS Literacy Link
- Incorporation of Read on the Web into KAELI curriculum

KYAE purchased a statewide user's license for the computer-based GED Official Practice Test (OPT) available to all 120 counties. Students who take the computer-based OPT receive a learner prescription individualized for each test-taker, providing adult educators with a robust teaching tool. Nearly 100 adult educators attended six training sessions in FY05.

KYAE and Newspaper in Education at the *Lexington Herald-Leader* partnered to provide an exciting new tool in the adult educator's instructional toolbox. Adult education programs statewide have the ability to access the electronic version of the *Lexington Herald-Leader* newspaper and Newspaper in Education (NIE) specialized curriculum and training to use digital newspapers as a teaching tool. More than 100 adult educators attended two training workshops.

KYAE conducted 18 workshops to train nearly 400 adult educators on the use of AERIN, KYAE's online data collection system for NRS reporting. Through AERIN, KYAE receives real-time data on enrolled students directly from providers to regularly evaluate program effectiveness.

KYAE contracted with a technology support firm to provide technology assistance to county programs. Five technicians assured that all adult education sites have access to online courseware, configure workstations, install plug-ins and software, handle system maintenance and advise on buying new equipment.

Kentucky is one of 15 states participating in Project IDEAL (Improving Distance Education to Adult Learners). In FY05, KYAE completed case studies outlining best practices used by experienced distance educators in six counties. These best practices are being disseminated to new instructors during PLATO and WIN workshops. KYAE staff attended the Project IDEAL conference in Michigan to share the case studies and learn about distance education initiatives in other consortium states.

Activity Four – Literacy Resources

The support of state or regional networks of literacy resource centers.

KYAE is a member of the Southern LINCS consortium and regularly promotes the benefits of LINCS through the KYAE e-newsletter. Additionally, in conjunction with the Kentucky Virtual Library, KYAE has developed a resource database specific to Kentucky that provides access to thousands of databases and resources. The site links to the national LINCS system, expanding access for Kentucky's adult educators and students.

Activity Five – Monitoring and Evaluation

The monitoring and evaluation of the quality of, and the improvement in, adult education and literacy activities.

In FY05, KYAE implemented a new Performance and Accountability policy to monitor and evaluate county programs. At a minimum, county programs are expected to meet enrollment goals and at least 50 percent of the NRS performance indicators. To assist programs in meeting or exceeding goals, KYAE reviews program data to facilitate continuous improvement to help students meet their goals. KYAE monitors programs through desk reviews and onsite reviews.

Technical Assistance

Programs are evaluated as described in "Activity Two." Programs deemed in need of technical assistance are required to complete a self-review form that leads to the development of a program improvement plan. Through onsite visits, ongoing communication and training, a program improvement team provides support to the county provider. Support includes assistance with professional development, student recruitment and retention strategies, record keeping, evaluation of instruction, connection to replicable models of best practice, links to other local partners and other support based on individual needs.

Continuous Improvement

KYAE focuses on continuous improvement and effective communication as an integral part of good management. Many avenues are employed to meet ever increasing enrollment and NRS goals and promote continuous improvement, including a monthly e-newsletter, continuously updated Web site, e-mail, letters, periodic group meetings with adult educators and contact with fiscal agents. KYAE focuses communication efforts on disseminating valuable resources, best practices, replicable models, professional development opportunities, adult education research, new curriculum tools, and changes in state and federal regulations and KYAE policies.

KYAE also monitors 50 GED test centers to ensure compliance with national GED Testing Service standards.

Annual Audits

KYAE annually conducts random comprehensive performance and financial audits of at least 25 percent of Kentucky's adult education programs. Over a period of four years, all

programs are audited. The audits consist of performance and financial reviews. Results of the audit are used as a financial practices and program improvement tool.

Activity Six – Incentives

Incentives for program coordination and integration and performance awards.

KYAE provided nearly \$1 million in performance incentive funding to 88 counties in FY05. These counties met or exceeded annual enrollment goals and at least 50 percent of the NRS core performance indicators. The amount of performance incentive funding is based on a percentage of each county's base funding.

Activity Seven – Curricula

Developing and disseminating curricula, including curricula incorporating phonemic awareness, systematic phonics, fluency and reading comprehension.

KYAE provides online curriculum products, including PLATO, WIN and Read on the Web, and supports adult educators in using these to meet their students' needs. See "Activity Three." Completion of the WIN curriculum prepares students to take the ACT WorkKeys assessments that lead to the Kentucky Employability Certificate (KEC). In FY05, 1,257 adult education students earned KECs.

Students who want to improve their work skills, get a GED or enroll in college may opt to use PLATO online. PLATO allows the learner and instructor to design a course of instruction to meet individual student's needs and interests. Topics include communications, mathematics, science, social studies, life skills and work skills.

Read on the Web is an online learning product that uses voice-recognition technology to encourage adults to learn to read. Learners set their own pace and facilitators can monitor progress online. *Read on the Web* is designed for adults whose reading scores are at the lowest levels. It has also been used for adults in ESL. The product draws on current adult reading research and exemplary learning practices. This curriculum product was created by KYAE in partnership with the Kentucky Virtual University and the Collaborative Center for Literacy Development.

KYAE and Newspaper in Education at the *Lexington Herald-Leader* partnered to provide access to digital newspaper instruction and a specialized curriculum. See "Activity Three" for details.

To better prepare adults for postsecondary education and workforce expectations, KYAE has produced draft content standards predicated on the American Diploma Project benchmarks, which were created by Education Trust and endorsed by the Kentucky State P-16 Council. Kentucky adult educators, postsecondary faculty and business and community leaders formed an advisory group and writing work teams to produce standards for mathematics, reading and writing. Feedback has been solicited from county adult education programs, and other stakeholder focus groups are planned. These standards will inform student assessment, curricula and instructional strategies as well as guide professional development for adult educators. Kentucky was one of 15 states selected to join the national Content Standards Consortia focusing on the development, alignment and implementation of content standards for adult education programs. With its help and continued access to resources (i.e., adult education content standards warehouse), KYAE anticipates soliciting proposals to align assessments, curricula and instruction and implement complementary professional development.

KYAE regularly informs adult educators of curricula and other resources through its monthly newsletter. In FY05, information was disseminated about health curricula, ESL toolkits, Black History Month curriculum resources, mathematics curricula, reading resources, family literacy activity resources, the National Institute for Literacy Special Collection, LINCS and OVAE's new English Literacy and Civics Web site.

Activity Eight – Other Activities

Other activities of statewide significance that promote the purpose of this title.

In August 2004, KYAE disseminated an evaluation of Kentucky's family literacy program by Thomas, Warren and Associates. The study asserts that Kentucky "has been, and continues to be, a widely recognized supporter of family literacy services and exerts a strong national influence." The report contains nine recommendations and numerous suggested actions for implementation, which were presented to adult education providers at regional meetings in August 2004. Based on the evaluation, KYAE revised its family literacy performance indicators and aligned the child indicators to the Kentucky Department of Education early childhood standards. In addition, KIFL is using the evaluation as a foundation for professional development and technical assistance.

TWA is conducting follow-up research to identify characteristics, attributes and best practices of high-performing family literacy programs. TWA is examining if and how programs have implemented previous recommendations. KYAE anticipates sharing findings with programs statewide to promote continuous quality improvement.

Activity Nine – Coordination

Coordination with existing support services, such as transportation, childcare, and other assistance designed to increase rates of enrollment in, and successful completion of, adult education and literacy activities, to adults enrolled in such activities.

One of KYAE's keys to success is the breadth and depth of partnerships. The charge of increasing the knowledge and skills of Kentucky's undereducated adults is too broad for one state government agency alone; therefore, partnerships with public and private entities are critical to KYAE's success. A list of major partners follows.

- Eastern Kentucky University
- Head Start
- Job Corps Centers
- Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services
 - Family Resource and Youth Services Centers
- Kentucky Chamber of Commerce
- Kentucky Community and Technical College System
 - Work and Learn Project
- Kentucky Department of Corrections
- Kentucky Department of Military Affairs
 - Kentucky Youth Challenge
- Kentucky Education Cabinet
 - Council on Postsecondary Education
 - Kentucky State P-16 Council
 - Kentucky Virtual Library
 - Kentucky Virtual University
 - Kentucky Department for Workforce Investment
 - Kentucky Workforce Investment Board
 - Office for the Blind
 - Office of Career and Technical Education
 - Office of Employment and Training
 - Office of Vocational Rehabilitation

- One-Stop Career Centers
- Kentucky Department of Education
 - Even Start
- Kentucky Educational Television
- Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority
- Kentucky Industrial Development Corporation
- Local Boards of Education
- Local Workforce Investment Boards
- Morehead State University
- National Center for Family Literacy
 - Kentucky Institute for Family Literacy
- University of Kentucky
 - Collaborative Center for Literacy Development
- U.S. Department of Education
 - Office of Vocational and Adult Education
- Western Kentucky University

Activity Ten – Workforce Education

Integration of adult education instruction and occupational skill training, and promoting linkages with employers.

During FY05, 50,401 adults were enrolled in Kentucky's workforce education programs. In FY05, employees benefiting from workforce education represented 1,867 employers in 112 Kentucky counties.

The Workforce Alliance, representing KYAE, CPE, Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS) and the Cabinet for Economic Development, provides a responsive, coordinated system to leverage new and existing resources to maximize the number of adults and employers served. Through the Workforce Alliance, KYAE funds basic skills training for incumbent and prospective employees.

KYAE programs provide instruction to prepare adults to take the ACT WorkKeys assessment for the KEC, a standardized credential that validates reading, math and locating information skills for specific occupations. Because the KCTCS has profiled its technical courses with ACT WorkKeys, adult students who score well on the assessment can seamlessly transition into technical programs.

KYAE programs provide targeted instruction for the Kentucky Manufacturing Skills Standards (KMSS) assessment, which is based on the academic, employability and occupational skills identified by industry as necessary for manufacturing employment.

KYAE is leading the development of e3.ky.gov, formerly known as Project Excel, an Internet-based database and repository to connect employers to Kentuckians with GEDs, certificates, licenses and degrees. This database will also provide aggregate data on the number of individuals with credentials in a variety of geographic and demographic presentations.

Two SkillMobile training centers feature a comprehensive selection of curricula, desktop computers, printers and wireless Internet access. In FY05, 1,574 employees representing 38 employers were served through SkillMobile training at their workplace. These numbers are up from 644 employees and 17 employers in FY04.

In FY05, Governor Fletcher announced a new public-private educational partnership that includes KYAE, Amazon.com and the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce. This innovative initiative will seek to significantly increase the number of GED graduates over a two-year period in the 20-county area that makes up the labor pool for the Amazon.com

Fulfillment Center in Campbellsville and many other Kentucky businesses. Amazon.com, which requires the minimum of a GED for employees, will provide up to \$40 for a GED test fee reimbursement and an Amazon.com gift card to GED graduates who are residents of the 20-county area, regardless of whether they are interested in Amazon.com employment.

In FY05, KYAE established “Learning for Life Champions” to honor businesses for significant contributions in promoting educational achievement in the Commonwealth. Learning for Life Champions reflect the private-public partnerships critical to raising the standard of living and the quality of life for all of the Commonwealth’s citizens. The charter members are Amazon.com, Kentucky Chamber of Commerce, Team Taylor County, Graviss McDonalds Restaurants, Owensboro Medical Health System and Murray-Calloway County Hospital.

Activity Eleven – Postsecondary Linkages

Linkages with postsecondary educational institutions.

Kentucky Adult Education is a unit of the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education. This partnership continues to create new avenues for 1) recruiting adult students and helping them to transition to postsecondary education and 2) better coordinating workforce education. Some examples of linkages to postsecondary education institutions include:

- Membership in the Kentucky State P-16 Council helps KYAE align curricula and assessments to the American Diploma Project benchmarks to adequately prepare adults to meet rigorous postsecondary and workforce standards.
- See “Activity One” for information about KAEI at the University of Kentucky’s CCLD and the Academy for Professional Development at Morehead State University. The vice-president for KYAE serves on the CCLD advisory board.
- Enhanced coordination with KCTCS facilitates the promotion of workforce development through the KEC and the KMSS assessment. See “Activity Ten.” KYAE also collaborates with KCTCS on the Work and Learn project, which transitions welfare clients from GED to postsecondary.
- Through the Kentucky Virtual University, the Kentucky Virtual Adult Education Web site (www.kyvae.org) allows adults to learn any place, any time, at their convenience. The KYVU and Kentucky Virtual Library provide a centralized Web-based system available at all times at no cost to the eligible user.
- KYAE is a member of the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority’s (KHEAA) GoHigherKy.org, a new online resource to serve students from middle school through adult to plan for postsecondary. Unlike most states, a major segment of the Web site focuses on adult students. The vice-president for KYAE serves on the KHEAA advisory board, and a KYAE senior associate serves on the GoHigherKy advisory board.

CPE and KYAE are waging an all-out effort to move more GED graduates to college, and the efforts are showing results. The GED college-going rate increased from 12 percent for the 1998 cohort to 19 percent for the 2002 cohort.

2. Kentucky Adult Education Effectiveness

In FY05, Kentucky met or exceeded performance measures for 13 of 14 NRS core indicators: beginning ABE literacy, beginning ABE, low intermediate ABE, high intermediate ABE, low adult secondary, beginning literacy ESL, beginning ESL, low

intermediate ESL, high intermediate ESL, low advanced ESL, postsecondary education enrollment, employment retention and GED attainment. In FY05, the enrollment goal for KYAE was 115,000; actual enrollment totaled 124,801 students. In addition, 88 Kentucky county programs earned incentive funding for meeting or exceeding FY05 enrollment and at least 50 percent of NRS core performance indicators. Thirty-six counties met at least 90 percent of NRS core performance indicators.

External agencies also evaluated the effectiveness of KYAE statewide efforts and county programs. Some examples follow.

A 2005 Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) report on adult education cites Kentucky as a model for other states to emulate and praises the Commonwealth for setting goals, requiring accountability and aggressively tackling the adult learning challenge. In the report, *Investing Wisely in Adult Learning is Key to State Prosperity*, SREB President Mark Musick writes, “Kentucky has won national recognition for its efforts. It set specific enrollment targets for its adult education programs and provided funding based on the results. Enrollment doubled. Kentucky’s success shows that facing the challenge, being creative and committing resources can work.”

A national case study spotlighting Kentucky’s progress in adult education was released by the Council for Advancement of Adult Literacy (CAAL). The report focuses on the “astounding success” of KYAE-CPE and KCTCS. “As a national model, the Kentucky system is fascinating and instructive in numerous ways,” noted Gail Spangenberg, CAAL president. The report cited examples of Kentucky innovations: an explicit statewide policy providing seamless transitions from adult education to postsecondary; a learner-centered and competency-based adult education program; a large investment in workforce education; community college presidents who support adult education; and an array of linkages between adult education and the community college systems.

An October 2004 report released by the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce acknowledges significant KYAE accomplishments and advocates for increased funding for adult education. “Making it Work, Policies to Promote Self-Sufficiency for Kentucky’s Working Families” is part of the Working Poor Families Project, a national initiative supported by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, Ford Foundation and Rockefeller Foundation.

The Indiana Chamber of Commerce featured KYAE’s success in workforce education in its March/April 2005 issue of *BizVoice*, a chamber publication. The article provided information on the SkillMobiles, Workforce Alliance, employer partnerships and the Kentucky Employability Certificate. The November 2004 issue of “Focus on Basics” also spotlighted Kentucky workforce education.

3. Integration of Activities

Adult education activities are integrated with other education, training and employment programs at state and local levels. At the state level, CPE-KYAE are organized within the Kentucky Education Cabinet, which also includes all of the required One-Stop Career Center partners. The cabinet organization positions KYAE to coordinate with other agencies essential to the success of the Commonwealth’s workforce investment system. See partner agencies in “Activity Nine.” These linkages create natural opportunities to partner, communicate and collaborate.

KYAE is fully supportive of the one-stop delivery system vision, as evidenced by its participation in One-Stop Career Centers through the following activities:

- KYAE is represented on the Kentucky Workforce Investment Board by the CPE president.
- Local Workforce Investment Boards include representation from adult education. In most areas, a local provider fulfills those responsibilities.
- KYAE staff are members of several Local Workforce Investment Boards.
- Adult education program services are made available through the One-Stop delivery system.

The integrated working and referral relationship between KYAE providers and local One-Stop Career Centers does not allow KYAE to quantify the dollar amount of Title II funds being used to support activities and service through the one-stop delivery system aggregately at the state level. Many county adult education programs staff the resource rooms of One-Stop Career Centers. In addition, KYAE is supporting Kentucky's One-Stop Career Center system through the use of Title II incentive funding. With this funding, two system-building activities are occurring in Kentucky:

- PLATO Learning and WIN Adult Education and Skills Evaluation software is available across the Commonwealth, including in the 28 comprehensive One-Stop Career Centers.
- WorkKeys assessments and the KEC are provided to One-Stop Career Center customers. The KEC is endorsed by KYAE, the Kentucky Workforce Investment Board and signed by Governor Fletcher.

In FY05, KYAE contracted with KCTCS to provide evening adult education programs for 2,439 inmates in 12 state institutions. County adult education programs provided services for 236 inmates in two state institutions. In FY05, 6,746 inmates in 72 local jails were served by county adult education programs.

Adult education and family literacy programs in all 120 counties collaborate with local Even Start and Head Start programs, business and industry, family resource and youth service centers, preschool programs, daycare, healthcare, school boards, social service agencies, churches and other community-based organizations. Partnerships in this manner provide opportunities to share resources and eliminate unnecessary duplication, especially with regard to serving children.

4. EL Civics Grants

Kentucky served 468 EL/Civics students in FY05, up from 308 in FY04. Adult education programs in Boone, Christian, Daviess, Jefferson and Warren counties were awarded EL/Civics grants.

The programs offer morning and evening civics classes for beginning, intermediate and advanced ESL students to supplement existing ESL instruction. Programs combine field trips to local historic landmarks with curricula: Voices of Freedom, English and Civics; Preparation for Citizenship; A Cultural Reader-USA, PLATO EASY; Rights and Responsibilities; Community Experiences; Contemporary's Number Power: Consumer Math; Reading Horizons. Assessments used are BEST, BEST Plus or CASAS.

Jefferson County has developed a curriculum that incorporates Kentucky's history and famous Kentuckians. Its modules include field trips to historic sites in the Commonwealth and provide online exercises. KYAE has made the Jefferson County curriculum available to all Kentucky providers via the KYAE Web site.